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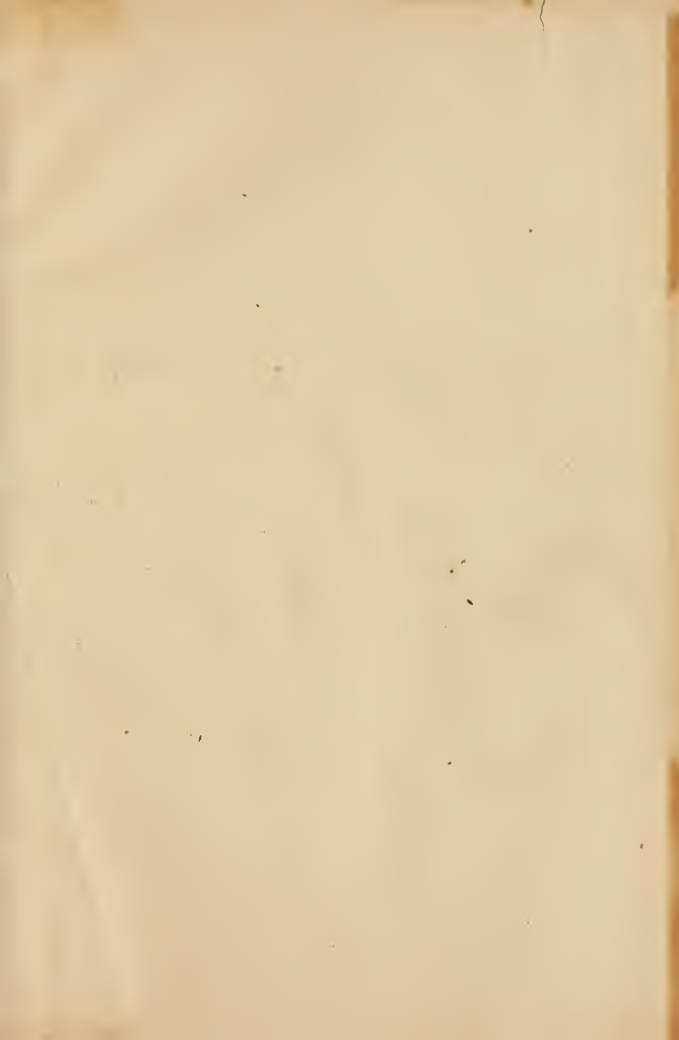


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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.









THE
HONEST AMERICAN VOTER'S
Little Catechism
FOR
1880.

BY
BLYTHE HARDING.

Copyrighted, 1880.

New York :
JOHN POLHEMUS, PUBLISHER, 102 NASSAU ST.

1880.

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PREFACE.

I was invited the other day to take down, as Stenographer, what purported to be a discussion upon some general political topics, and more especially on the forthcoming presidential election. One of the disputants entrenched himself in what, I believe, scholars call the Socratic method, that is, he *pumped* his supposed antagonist dry. Whether the world at large may think the dialogue as funny as I did myself, I can form no opinion. It is to solve this question that I give it to the public.

BLYTHE HARDING.

NEW YORK, *August 31st*, 1880.

THE DIALOGUE.

What is a republic ?

—A state, or Union of states, in which the people holds supreme power.

How does the people exercise this power ?

—Through men elected for this purpose.

What are these men called ?

—Senators and members of Congress or Congressmen.

Is there a head or chief in a republic ?

—Certainly.

What is he called ?

—The President.

Must the President be elected ?

—Yes, by the people.

Who declares the voice of the people in this matter ?

—The electors of the different states, appointed to do it by the people.

Is it necessary that the whole people should agree on one man in order to elect him ?

—No; it only needs a majority of the nation, voting through the electors.

Do the votes of the electors generally follow the voice of the people in the different states ?

—They ought to follow it.

Are the electors considered bound to vote as the majority of the people in their different states direct ?

—Undoubtedly they are.

Then it is fair to say that the vote of a majority of the electors show which way the majority of the people voted ?

—That's a simple question. Why, of course !

What are the duties of the President ?

—To mind the business of the nation, and his own, too.

Anything else ?

—Isn't that enough ?

Well, but what is that business ?

—The business of the nation ?

Yes.

—He makes treaties, weeds out old political hacks, and sends them on embassies where they cannot annoy him, and have nothing to do; appoints Judges of the Supreme Court like Joe Bradley, when he wants to play eight-to-seven, commands the army and navy, gets fifty thousand dollars a year, takes all the presents he can get, lives in the White House, and does a kind of general housekeeping business for the country.

I was not talking of Grant. Let that go. Does he do anything else ?

—Yes; if he comes from Ohio, he fills nearly every place he's got to give away with lean, hungry Ohio men, so that you can get a "whiff" of that state all over Washington, and in a good many other places too, any time of the day or night.

Really I don't understand you. All our Presidents do not come from Ohio or Illinois!

—Thank God they don't.

Just tell me what the Senators have to do ?

—To prevent Congressmen from making fools of themselves.

Anything else ?

—Yes; to keep an eye on the "jobs" Congressmen are always trying to put through.

What are the duties of Congressmen ?

—God knows! I don't think they do themselves.

What should you think ?

—From the way they go on, I should say : to make a grab whenever they can.

Who is now President of the United States ?

—Samuel J. Tilden.

That is a mistake. The present President of the United States is Rutherford B. Hayes.

—He is, is he ? Yes, just about as much as I'm owner of Central Park, when I sit down on a bench there.

What do you mean ?

—I mean to say a man can't be President of this country unless he is elected, and Hayes was never elected.

Who was elected then ?

—Why, Samuel J. Tilden, to be sure!

Then how did Hayes get in ?

—He had some "statesmen" working for him, who kept the right man out and pushed him in.

Do you really mean that ?

—As certain as death.

Very strange ! Who were these "statesmen ;" I suppose you mean his friends ?

—Friends, indeed ! Yes, like wolves are to sheep.

Is Mr. Hayes a sheep ?

—The people that put him where he is, have made him sheepish enough ; but he isn't a sheep. His hide is too thick for that. He would be a mule, *only he isn't quite big enough.*

Ah ! You have a strange way of expressing yourself. But tell me, who were his "friends" as you call them ?

—The same men that "worked" Grant.

What do you mean by "working" Grant ?

—Putting a pair of "blinkers" on him, and then stealing everything they could lay their hands on ; and then when they were going to be turned out, stealing the presidency so as to get another "hack" at the "swag."

Really, this language sounds dreadful, I don't understand it ; but I suppose you mean right.

—Mean right ? I should think I do. I *am* right. Only in talking of thieves, I am using the language of thieves. They simply wanted to keep their places and go on plundering the people.

Speaking about General Grant, what kind of a President was he ?

—The best judge of whiskey, cigars and horses that ever stepped into the White House.

Heavens ! how dull you are ! I'm not talking about whiskey and cigars, I mean what were his gifts ?

—Gifts ? to whom ? I never heard that he made any gifts. He took everything offered him from a brown-stone front downwards, until it got to a bull-pup with the expressage unpaid—there he stopped.

Shall I ever get you to understand me ? I mean had he any good qualities ?

—Yes; he had. He wore a padlock on his mouth, was a rattling fighter, and stuck to his friends. In fact, he was generally bull-headed, *as it were*.

Good enough ! But these are not the qualities I am speaking of. I mean qualities that the people look for in a President. Perhaps “sticking to his friends” may have been one. What do you mean by that ?

—What do I mean ? Why, screening and protecting a set of rascals not half as honest as nine-tenths of the men in jail for robbery.

Do you mean me to understand by screening that he did what they do with coal, sift out the little ones and keep in the big ones ?

—Not at all. There was no “sift” to Grant; he stuck to the whole lot until the Republican party told him he must either let them go or lose the country.

By the way, are the Republicans good people ?

—Yes; just as good as any other, and a good deal better, if they were only Democrats.

Why do you complain of them, then ?

—I don’t complain of the honest Republican people of the country. I complain of the Republican politicians.

What is a “politician ?”

—Sometimes an honest man like John Morrissey; hardly ever a fool; generally a knave.

What do you mean by a political party ?

—The term has two meanings. First, all the honest people of the country who believe in a given set of political principles. Secondly, it means all the political office-holders, *managers* and wire-pullers, whose business is to throw dust in the eyes of the non-politicians (*i. e.*, the simple voters).

In this latter sense how many parties are there?

—A good many people think there is only one.

To what party does Mr. Hayes belong?

—To the Orange party.

What is that?

—The temperance party that takes its rum in iced oranges.

Is he an able man?

—Yes; able to take a kicking from the Republicans better than any other man in the country.

What do you mean by taking a kicking?

—Why, accepting the toe of the political boot.

Can you name any one who has operated on him in this delicate manner?

—Yes; Roscoe Conkling.

Would you call *him* a good kicker or bootist?

—Yes; tip-top.

What proof have you of this?

—When Hayes and Sherman kicked Cornell out of office, Roscoe kicked him back on them as governor of the state of New York. When they kicked Arthur out of the custom-house, Roscoe kicked him into the second place on the Republican ticket.

Any further proof?

—Yes; he kicked Evarts to New York to talk for Cornell, whom, as before said, the administration kicked out. John Sherman was afraid of his toe when he spoke lately at Washington *in favor* of the man whom he forced the President to kick out, saying he was unfit for the office he held. At last it looks as if Roscoe was going to kick himself into talking for Garfield, whom he despises.

Why should he do that?

—Oh! it's only the "machine" working.

I don't understand.

—Have you ever seen a bull trying to stop a locomotive?

No.

—Well, if ever you do, you'll see something like a

politician trying to butt against the "party," *alias* the "machine."

Then is the great bootist afraid of the "machine?"

—I don't think he's afraid of anything. But he knows there's no use kicking against *that*.

By the way, you said Hayes had been put into office without being elected, had Conkling anything to do with that?

—No. He's too proud a man to stoop to any dirty work. He has held Hayes' administration at arm's length, and never gone near them except when he was on the "kick."

Then who did put Hayes into office?

—There were a good many in the job. Thirty-three in Florida and seventy-two in Louisiana; Garfield and John Sherman, chief "engineers."

Do you mean to say that the man nominated by the Republicans for President, and the Secretary of the Treasury countenanced the men who forced Hayes on the country?

—If not, why were rewards promised the rascals for doing it. When the job was done, and Hayes inaugurated, every one of the scoundrels was "provided for."

Didn't the other party protest?

—Of course they did. But it was the old story of the fly and spider.

In what way?

—The 'Pubs got the 'Crats to consent to have the difficulty settled by an Electoral Commission and then euchred them.

How?

—Simple enough. There were eight 'Pubs on the Commission and seven 'Crats. They met. Up gets old Evarts. Says he to the Commissioners: "Boys"—I mean—"Gentlemen! The first duty of a Judge, if he wants very badly to find the 'cat in the bag,' is to look up the chimney." Here he winked at the Judges on Joe Bradley's side. They say he looked very much like Beecher, when he proved his innocence in

Brooklyn. "Therefore," says he, "if the involutory concatenation of a political residuum approximates to the concordant volitions of a Republican effervescence, it is extra self-evident that judicial investigation into supernumerary circumstantial totality, is beyond the hypodermic flexal radiation of your illustrations." The argument was short, but it settled the case!

But I don't understand a word of it.

—What does that matter? He didn't himself. But they voted on the question all the same.

How did the vote go?

—Well, that *is* a simple question! Why eight to seven, to be sure! What he said was supposed to mean they had no right to take evidence. The 'Pubs agreed with him. They said they were there to do nothing, and intended to do it, and pay attention to it. They were eight. And they voted eight—eight, eight, eight, eight—every time.

Well, but what had Garfield particularly to do with this?

—First of all he said in Congress: "The Commission is clothed with power to hear and determine the vote of any state." * * * He declared on his honor (!) that the Commission had power to go down into the states and *review* the act of every officer, to *open every ballot box*, and to pass judgment on *every ballot* cast by seven millions of Americans. He said they had all the powers of the Senate and House of Representatives to examine into everything.

And then?

—Well, then, as he was playing euchre, he popped the "joker" (himself) on the 'Crats' left bower, and voted the Commission had no right to do anything of the sort. In the next game the "*joker*" will be discarded.

How about the 'Crats, as you call them?

—Well, as they were only seven, and couldn't be in two places at once, and vote fourteen, they threw up their hand.

Why, this was simply a farce?

—That's so; but it's very curious the people that were watching the farce didn't see anything funny about

it, or laugh. They were quiet—very quiet. I think they had a notion the tragedy would come later, and then they'd change the *cast*, and take a hand in themselves, just to see how it would go.

Please, explain yourself?

—Well, during the farce, the Electoral Commission, Garfield being one, were the actors, and the people were the spectators. During the tragedy the people will be the actors, and Garfield, the Electoral Commission, and the "machine" politicians will be the spectators—a very *select* audience. Admission free. The stage will be rather large, about the size of the United States. Lots of room for the audience. After the play there will be a procession to the White House in Washington. The actors will invite their special friends to it. I don't think Garfield, the Electoral Commission, or the Republican "machine" engineers, will get cards of invitation. They will, perhaps, be asked to a free lunch in Ohio.

Now for the application.

—Well, you must remember the American people are not born idiots. They saw through the whole of this Electoral Commission business, and they kept quiet. They were enraged, however, to think these politicians could imagine them so dead daft. I think, too, at one time they were within an ace of letting themselves out. If they had, there would have been bad work !

They did better to wait.

—To be sure; but what kills one is to see these same wire-pullers putting up a man like Garfield for President. Why, he's got the rottenest record of the whole lot. You hear them say he's a statesman. Yes, indeed! and I'm Sultan of Turkey. He's nothing more than a common political hack, and an unsafe one at that.

How so?

—*His own party* convicted him of bribe-taking, after he had sworn he did nothing of the sort; many newspapers, on his own side, wanted him expelled from the House. Heaven knows what the *hidden* doings of a man like that are. The samples that have come to light are the worst possible. To wind up with, he

went to Chicago expressly to look after John Sherman's interests for the nomination, and then sold him clean out, boots, hat and all! No wonder he said: "My God, what will John Sherman say?"

And what did Sherman say?

—The "machine" put the screw on, and *honest* John Sherman had to say he was the best man in the country to make President.

Did the audience notice any swelling in John's throat?

—No; but he got a bad attack of the hiccoughs soon after.

Stomach too full, I suppose?

—Exactly. John would have liked to *throw up* Garfield, but the "machine" forced John to keep him on his stomach. That's what was the matter.

Well, but after all, Garfield served his country?

—He did, served her a good many dirty tricks.

That's not what I mean. Didn't he serve in the army?

—What army?

The regular army.

—Do you mean to insult that splendid set of officers?

No, I'm serious.

—He was a volunteer colonel for about a year, and then slipped into Congress when Hayes said any man that did so ought to be *scalped*. Hayes deserves one for that, anyhow.

Can you mention any "hot affairs" in which he was engaged?

—Yes; he led the "left" wing of the Credit Mobilier brigade in the raid on the Treasury, under Oakes Ames, was desperately wounded and received honorable mention from Schuyler Colfax, since dismissed the service. He headed the "forlorn hope" in the attack on the Washington pavements. Was again badly wounded; this time in the—no, I mean, *from* behind by his own men. In this attack a *private* named de Golyer used a \$5,000 dollar bill for wadding, which was found when the wound was probed. This wound is still open, as well as the first, and both give the *daring partisan* constant and dreadful annoyance.

What *great* services to the country! Go on, please.

—He was conspicuous in many other engagements. He covered the advance of the Salary and Back Pay

Brigade in another fierce assault on the Treasury. Here he was so desperately wounded that his friends insisted on his resigning and nursing his * * * character. He refused, and his fellow soldiers have nominated him to supersede General Hayes as Commander-in Chief of the "Silent Steelers."

You mean, of course, troops that charge without cheering?

—Not much! I mean a corps of "crack"(s)men. They are also called the "Stealthy Purloiners."

Can you mention any instances of Garfield's heroism?

—Loads! but one will be enough. A notorious freshwater buccaneer, named R-be-s-n, had joined the ranks. He was just falling into the hands of the enemy when Garfield seized him by the seat of his pants and the collar of his jacket, and dragged him back into the lines. The sight was too much for the enemy. They grounded arms and laughed outright. Two or three of the men, however, "potted" the heroic Garfield; he was again wounded just to the right of the end of the spinal column!

Please give me one more instance?

—He held the Black Friday bridge against the assault of the banking and currency column. (Committee.)

He reduced the enemy at one blow from 25,000 to 250.

Good gracious! How? With a sword-stroke?

—No! with a lead pencil!

Do you mean he annihilated 20,000 men?

—No! dollars!

Explain, if you please.

—Certainly. Some one high up—very high up—stood in to the tune of \$25,000 in the Fisk and Gould arrangement when they made a "corner" in gold. The money was sent by express. The manager of the express company assured the committee, there was no such entry in the book to Mrs. G—. Sunset Cox astonished them with some of his "reflected" light. He asked for the book and read out: Mrs. U. S. G., Wh—te Ho—se, money package, value \$25,000.

Dear me!

—Yes, and dear me, too! Wait a minute! Up jumps *Mentor* Garfield and says: It's only a slight mistake—evidently a mistake—the dot ought to be removed one figure to the right, thus \$250.00. Presto! Gentlemen!

Two hundred and fifty dollars you see, instead of twenty-five thousand. His pals remembered this, especially Grant, and he turned him loose on the Democratic majorities in Louisiana to do the same work.

He must be the very devil at figures.

—Just so; but that was *wiping out* a majority in both cases. In November he'll have to try his hand at figuring up a majority where it doesn't exist. Some difference between the two [ahem!] some *slight* difference.

I suppose you allude to the election?

—Pre cisely!

What is Mr. Garfield doing now?

—Playing the cat.

What do you mean?

—Trying to cover up the record behind him.

I don't see the allusion?

—That kind of allusion is seen through the *nose*.

Do you think this would be a *safe* country in Mr. Garfield's hands?

—What a question! Isn't he a "Jimmy"?

You mean a "tool" in the hands of the 'Pubs?

—You've hit it.

And they are going to make him President?

—Yes; President of the Salt River Navigation and Improvement Company, unlimited.

I thought they were going to make him President of the United States?

—I think they might if there wasn't some one else in the way.

Who's that?

—Hancock.

The man that signed the Declaration?

—Yes; the Declaration of Gettysburg.

What is he?

—A real gentleman.

What else?

—A great soldier.

Anything more?

—A true citizen.

He must be a *singular* man?

—He is; there are not *two* like him in the country.

I should like to see him.

—Nothing easier. He's big enough. Just *walk* over to Governor's Island.

How can you prove he's a gentleman?

—He's an officer of the United States army.

Quite sufficient. Tell me why he's a great soldier.

—He saved the Union in battle.

I thought Grant did that?

—Grant did first-rate fighting; but if Hancock hadn't won at Gettysburg, Grant and his army might as well have sat down where they were and gone into the "Tanner" business.

Did he take a part in any other great battles?

—Yes; in nearly every battle fought by the army of the Potomac until he was carried off the field at Gettysburg.

What did the country think of him?

—Everything that could be thought of a brave, noble nature.

What did Congress do?

—Passed a special vote of thanks to him for his conspicuous part in the battle that saved the country.

Of course they passed a vote of thanks to Garfield, too?

—Yes; a *silent* vote.

How do you prove that Hancock is a true citizen?

—Because he has profound respect for the laws and constitution of his country.

When did he show this?

—He has shown it all his life.

But more particularly?

—When the war was over he put up his sword. Grant, Garfield & Co. insisted he should rule with it. He refused. He told the trembling Southern people they had the same rights *in peace* as all other American citizens, and that he would make his army protect those rights.

What are those rights?

—Trial by jury, *habeas corpus*, free speech and free press.

Did he put that down in writing?

—I should think he did. He wrote a letter to old Pease, the governor of Texas, that must have flashed into him like lightning into a gooseberry bush.

Did he write anything else?

—Yes; the great Order No. 40.

I remember that. What did Andy Johnson say about it?

—He said: "When a great soldier, with unrestricted power in his hands to oppress his fellow-men, voluntarily foregoes the chance of gratifying selfish ambition, and devotes himself to building up the liberties and strengthening the laws of his country, he presents an example of the highest public virtue that human nature is capable of practising. Whenever power *above* the law courted his acceptance, he calmly put the temptation aside. By such magnanimous acts of forbearance he won the universal admiration of mankind, and left a name which has no rival in the history of the world."

Did he say anything else?

—Yes. He said: "I respectfully suggest to Congress that some public recognition of General Hancock's *patriotic* conduct is due, if not to him, to the friends of law and justice throughout the country. Of such an act as his, at such a time, it is but fit that the dignity should be vindicated and the virtue proclaimed, so that its value as an example may not be lost to the nation."

Did Congress do anything?

—Never mind Congress. The American people will do it in November by putting him where George Washington was, so that the whole world may take a good, long look at him. It's impossible to knock the modesty out of him, so we'll take it with him, and put it "*where it will do the most good.*"

Of course, Garfield felt just like Andy Johnson in this matter?

—Quite so.

How did he show it?

—By bringing a bill into Congress to *dismiss* General Hancock from the army for insisting on all the rights of citizens *in time of peace.*

Good heavens!

—Yes, good heavens! I should say so. That wasn't the worst part of it. He wanted the bill voted on the *next* day. And the act provided that it should *take effect as soon as it was passed.* So that, if General Hancock had nothing outside his pay, this soldier (?) who ran away from the field to go "jobbing" in Congress, would the *next day* have made a beggar of the man who really saved the Union!

Do you think good, honest Republican voters (I don't mean the "machine" men), know or remember anything about it?

—We live so fast that I expect many of them have let it drop out of their minds. *But now's the time for them to remember it.*

Has General Hancock shown how he can deal with trying difficulties since the war?

—I should rather think so. Do you remember when they had the terrible riots in Pennsylvania, and so much property was destroyed and so many lives lost in and about Pittsburgh? Well, the very men who to-day are talking up Garfield and running down Hancock, were shaking in their shoes; Schurz, *whom Hancock caught trying to make himself invisible at Gettysburgh*, among them. It was a regular Quakers' meeting. Finding they could make no head against it, and that the thing was spreading and getting to look like a revolution, what did they do? Why, they sent for the man whom Garfield wanted to beggar and disgrace, and besought him to take the thing in hand and restore order. They gave him full power.

And how did he act?

—Like a brave soldier, a true citizen and a real gentleman. While protecting the property of capitalists he was kind and forbearing to the working classes who believed they had a grievance.

What was the result?

—That dreadful affair was brought to a close by him without the shedding of one single drop of blood. Before he took command many had lost their lives. He put down the riot so firmly but so patiently that every one admired and praised him.

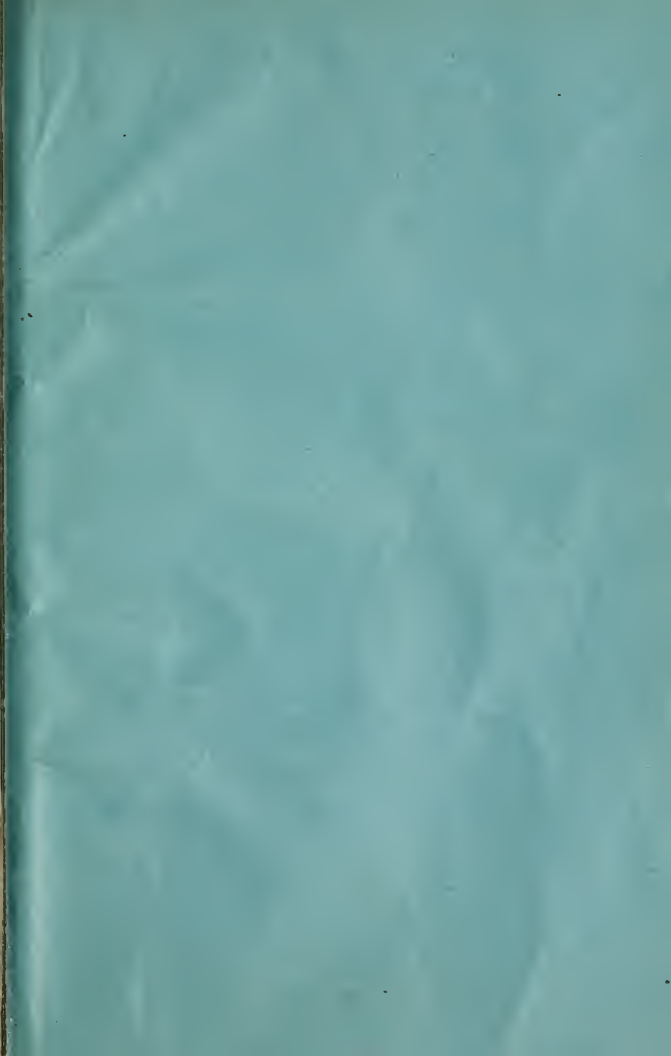
Do you think the people of Pennsylvania forget this great service?

—I wouldn't accuse them of being so ungrateful.

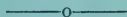
I suppose Garfield brought in another bill to dismiss him from the army for not proclaiming martial law, doing the drum-head trial business, and having a little human-target excursion every day?

—Come, come! Haven't you had enough of Garfield? Let me ask you one more question. Which of the two do you think is going to be the next President?

I know which of the two *ought* to be.



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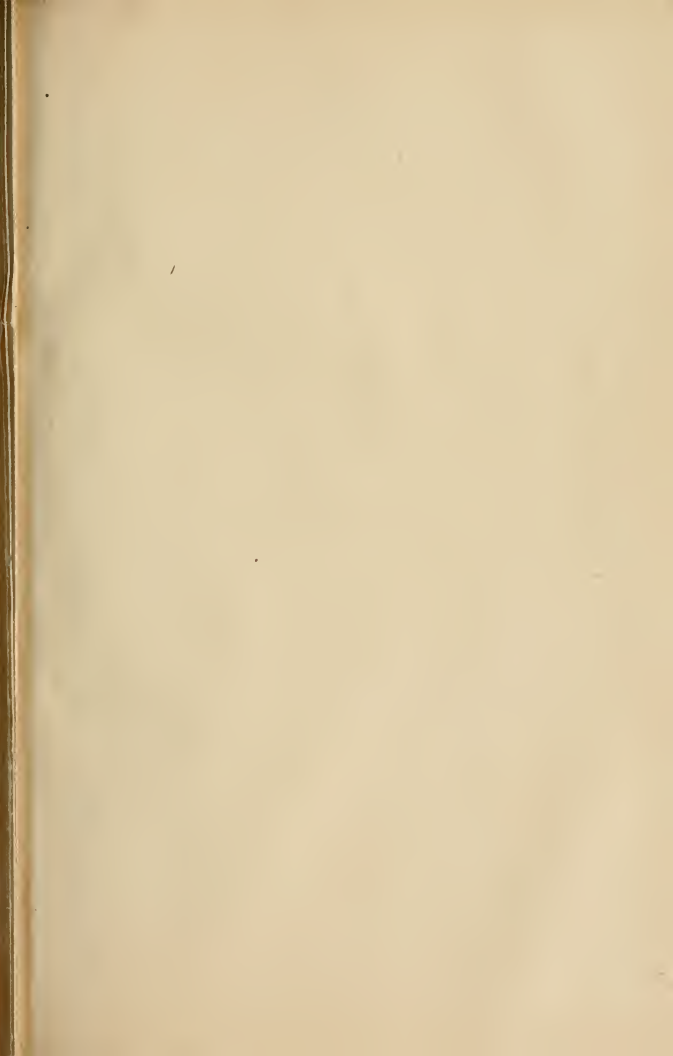
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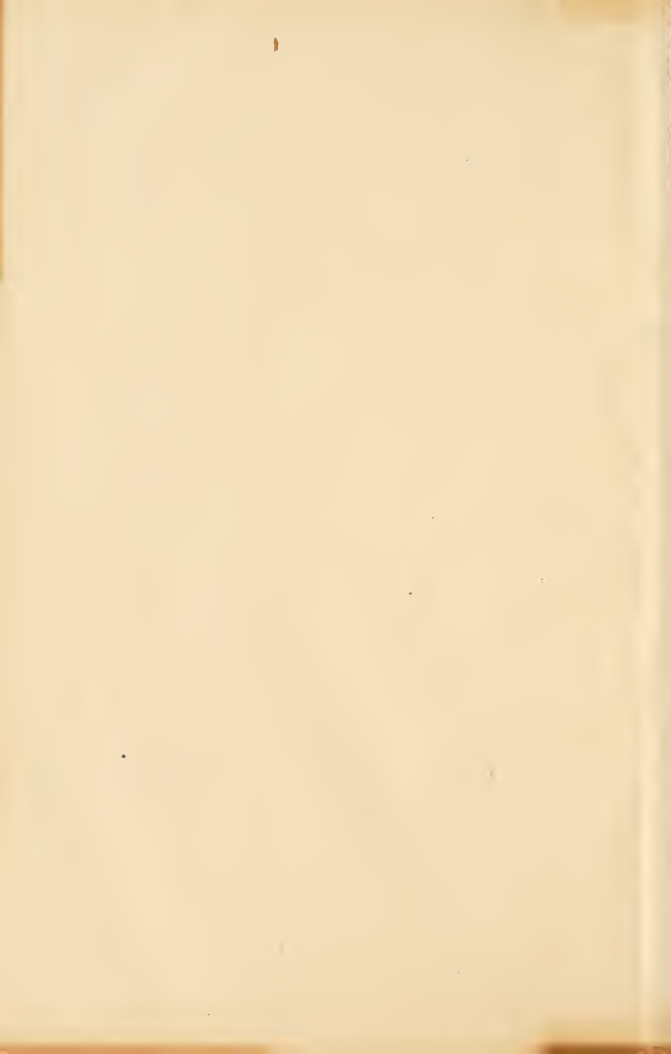
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